

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

(1. (currently amended) A transmission apparatus for transmitting digital content data via a communication medium, comprising:

~~attachment~~ means for attaching cost information per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data to said digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

~~transmission~~ means for transmitting said digital content data ~~attached with said cost information after converting a~~ the data format of said digital content data ~~attached with said cost information~~ into a data format suitable to said communication medium.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) The transmission apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

division means for dividing said digital content data into predetermined unit data volumes.

4. (original) The transmission apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

notification means for notifying a management unit of transmission information about said digital content data transmitted by said transmission means.

5. (original) The transmission apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said notification means notifies said management unit of, as transmission information about said digital content data transmitted by said transmission means, at least one of said cost information, information for identifying a sender, information for identifying a recipient, and a data volume of said digital content data transmitted.

6. (currently amended) A transmission method for transmitting digital content data via a communication medium, comprising the steps of:

attaching cost information per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data to said digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

transmitting said digital content data attached ~~with said cost information~~ after converting a the data format of said digital content data ~~attached with said cost information~~ into a data format suitable to said communication medium.

7. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for transmitting digital content data via a communication medium, said computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

attaching cost information per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data to said digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

transmitting said digital content data attached ~~with said cost information~~ after converting a the data format of said digital content data attached with said cost information into a data format suitable to said communication medium.

8. (currently amended) A reception apparatus for receiving digital content data transmitted via a communication medium, comprising:

~~reception~~ means for receiving said digital content data with its data format converted into a data format suitable for said communication medium and for restoring the received digital content data;

~~removal~~ means for removing ~~said cost information~~ per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data from the restored digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

reproduction means for reproducing said digital content data deprived of said cost information.

9. (original) The reception apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising:

notification means for notifying a management unit of reception information about said digital content data received by said reception means.

10. (original) The reception apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said notification means notifies, as said reception information about said digital content data received by said reception means, at least one of said cost information, information for identifying a sender, information for identifying a recipient, and a data volume of said received digital content data.

11. (currently amended) A reception method for receiving digital content data transmitted via a communication medium, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving said digital content with its data format converted into a data format suitable for said communication medium and for restoring the received digital content data;

removing ~~said cost information per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data~~ from the restored digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

reproducing said digital content data deprived of said cost information.

12. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for receiving digital content data transmitted via a communication medium, said computer-readable program comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving said digital content with its data format converted into a data format suitable for said communication medium and for restoring the received digital content data;

removing ~~said cost information per unit data volume and attribute information about said digital content data~~ from the restored digital content data, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

reproducing said digital content data deprived of said cost information.

13. (currently amended) A management apparatus for managing purchase and sale of digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit and received by a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising:

~~reception~~ means for receiving at least one of transmission information and reception information about said digital content data from a given point on a communication route between said transmission unit and said reception unit inclusive; and

~~computation~~ means for computing, on the basis of said at least one of said transmission information and said reception information received by said reception means, a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data via said communication medium, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

14. (original) The management apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

transmission means for transmitting information about the sale price of said digital content data computed by said computation means to a charging unit.

Al 15. (original) The management apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said computation means computes the sale price of said digital content data via said communication medium by multiplying cost information included in said reception information received by said reception means by a data volume of said received digital content data.

16. (currently amended) A management method for managing purchase and sale of digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit and received by a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising ~~the steps of:~~

receiving at least one of transmission information and reception information about said digital content data from a given point on a communication route between said transmission unit and said reception unit including the both; and

computing, on the basis of said at least one of said transmission information and said reception information received in said reception step, a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data via said communication medium, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

17. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for managing purchase and sale of digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit and received by a reception unit via a communication medium, said computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

receiving at least one of transmission information and reception information about said digital content data from a given point on a communication route between said transmission unit and said reception unit including the both; and

A computing, on the basis of said at least one of said transmission information and said reception information received in said reception step, a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data via said communication medium, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

18. (currently amended) A charging apparatus for charging for digital content data attached with cost information per unit data volume transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising:

~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring a sale price of said digital content data on the basis of said cost information per unit data volume, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

~~charging~~ means for charging a user of said reception apparatus on the basis of said sale price acquired by said ~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring.

19. (original) The charging apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said acquisition means acquires said sale price along with a usage fee for using said communication medium and said charging means charges said sale price along with said usage fee further comprises:

distribution means for dividing an amount of money paid by said user of said reception unit into a portion covering said sale price and another covering said usage fee.

20. (currently amended) A charging method for charging for digital content data attached with cost information per unit data volume transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

acquiring a sale price of said digital content data on the basis of said cost information per unit data volume, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

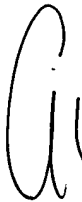
charging a user of said reception apparatus on the basis of said sale price acquired in said acquisition step.

21. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for charging for digital content data attached with cost information per unit data volume transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, said computer-readable program comprising ~~the steps of~~:

acquiring a sale price of said digital content data on the basis of said cost information per unit data volume, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume; and

charging a user of said reception apparatus on the basis of said sale price acquired in said acquisition step.

22. (currently amended) A charging apparatus for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising:

 ~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

~~synthesis~~ means for synthesizing said information about said sale price acquired by said ~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring with information about a usage fee for use of said communication medium; and

~~charging~~ means for charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of synthesized information supplied by said ~~synthesis~~ means for synthesizing.

23. (original) The charging apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising:

distribution means for dividing an amount of money paid by said user of said reception unit into a portion covering said sale price and another covering said usage fee.

24. (currently amended) A charging method for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, comprising:

acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

synthesizing said information about said sale price acquired in said acquisition step with information about a usage fee for use of said communication medium; and

charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of synthesized information supplied in said synthesis step.

25. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit via a communication medium, said computer-readable program comprising:

acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

synthesizing said information about said sale price acquired in said acquisition step with information about a usage fee for use of said communication medium; and

charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of synthesized information supplied in said synthesis step.


26. (currently amended) A charging apparatus for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit, comprising:

~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

~~synthesis~~ means for synthesizing said information about sale price acquired by said ~~acquisition~~ means for acquiring with information about a usage fee for use of information transmitted from said transmission unit; and

~~charging~~ means for charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of the synthesized information supplied by said ~~synthesis~~ means for synthesizing.

27. (original) The charging apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising:

 distribution means for dividing an amount of money paid by said user of said reception unit into a portion covering said sale price and another covering said usage fee.

28. (currently amended) A charging method for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

synthesizing said information about sale price acquired in said acquisition step with information about a usage fee for use of information transmitted from said transmission unit; and

charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of the synthesized information supplied in said synthesis step.

29. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for charging for digital content data transmitted from a transmission unit to a reception unit, said computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

acquiring information about a sale price per unit data volume of said digital content data, where said sale price includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

synthesizing said information about sale price acquired in said acquisition step with information about a usage fee for use of information transmitted from said transmission unit; and charging a user of said reception unit on the basis of the synthesized information supplied in said synthesis step.

30. (currently amended) A charging apparatus for charging for a predetermined service ordered from a first unit to a second unit via a network, comprising:

~~extraction~~ means for extracting cost information per unit volume from order information provided by said second unit to said first unit for ordering said predetermined service from said first unit to said second unit via said network; and

~~charging~~ means for charging a user of said first unit on the basis of said cost information per unit volume extracted by said ~~extraction~~ means for extracting, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

31. (original) The charging apparatus according to claim 30, wherein said extraction means extracts said cost information from said order information at a given point on said network between said first unit and said second unit inclusive.

32. (currently amended) A charging method for charging for a predetermined service ordered from a first unit to a second unit via a network, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

extracting cost information per unit volume from order information provided by said second unit to said first unit for ordering said predetermined service from said first unit to said second unit via said network; and

charging a user of said first unit on the basis of said cost information per unit volume extracted by said extraction step, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

33. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for charging for a predetermined service ordered from a first unit to a second unit via a network, said computer-readable program comprising ~~the steps of~~:

extracting cost information per unit volume from order information for ordering said predetermined service from said first unit to said second unit via said network; and

charging a user of said first unit on the basis of said cost information per unit volume extracted in said extraction step, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume.

34. (currently amended) A providing apparatus for providing a predetermined service ordered from a unit via a network, comprising:

~~attachment~~ means for attaching cost information per unit data volume about said predetermined service to order information for ordering said predetermined service by a user of said unit, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

~~transmission~~ means for transmitting said order information attached with said cost information to said unit via said network; and

~~acceptance~~ means for accepting an order placed by said unit via said network on the basis of said order information transmitted by said ~~transmission~~ means for transmitting.

35. (original) The providing apparatus according to claim 34, further comprising:

instruction means for instructing said providing apparatus to provide the ordered service said unit when said order placed on the basis of said order information transmitted by said transmission means has been accepted by said acceptance means.

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36. (currently amended) A providing method for providing a predetermined service ordered from a unit via a network, the method comprising the steps of:

attaching cost information per unit data volume about said predetermined service to order information for ordering said predetermined service by a user of said unit, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

transmitting said order information attached with said cost information to said unit via said network; and

accepting an order placed by said unit via said network on the basis of said order information transmitted in said transmission step.

37. (currently amended) A recording medium recording a computer-readable program for providing a predetermined service ordered from a unit via a network, said computer-readable program comprising ~~the steps of:~~

attaching cost information per unit data volume about said predetermined service to order information for ordering said predetermined service by a user of said unit, where said cost information includes at least one unit price of said unit data volume;

transmitting said order information attached with said cost information to said unit via said network; and

accepting an order placed by said unit via said network on the basis of said order information transmitted in said transmission step.

